

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 L-03 VO-03 SCA-01 /019 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3027

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS BRASILIA 10858

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: N/A

SUBJECT: VISA PROBLEMS OF CORRESPONDENTS

REF: BRASILIA 10299 LOU

1. FOLLOWING VISITS REPORTED REFTEL, PRESSATT SOUGHT FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESS OFFICE EXPLANATION OF WHY U.S. CORRESPONDENTS RESIDENT IN BRAZIL WERE NO LONGER BEING ISSUED MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISAS; ALSO RUNDOWN ON CURRENT STATUS. PRESS OFFICE EXPLANATION FOLLOWS.

A) A CUSTOM, WITHOUT BASIS IN LAW OR VISA REGULATIONS, "HAD GROWN UP," BY WHICH U.S. CORRESPONDENTS (BUT NOT THOSE OF OTHER NATIONALITIES) WERE ISSUED MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISAS. THEIR PASSPORTS WERE CONSIDERED, FOR VISA PURPOSES, TO BE EQUIVALENT TO U.S. OFFICIAL PASSPORTS.

B) THIS UNEVEN-HANDED TREATMENT FINALLY LED TO A COMPLAINT, "BY ANOTHER EMBASSY," WHICH COMPELLED THE MINISTRY'S VISA SECTION TO SEARCH FOR THE BASIS OF THE SPECIAL TREATMENT BEING ACCORDED U.S. CORRESPONDENTS. NONE WAS FOUND AND THE VISA SECTION INFORMED THE PRESS OFFICE THAT UNDER CURRENT REGULATIONS NO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT, REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY, COULD BE ISSUED A MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISA. (PRESS OFFICE BELIEVED THAT BRUCE HANDLER OF THE WASHINGTON POST WAS THE FIRST U.S. CORRESPONDENT TO WHOM NEW RULING WAS APPLIED.)

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C) THE PRESS OFFICE HAS INITIATED "A PAPER," WHICH IS NOW

GOING THROUGH MINISTRY CHANNELS, RECOMMENDING THAT THE VISAS SECTION BE EMPOWERED TO ISSUE MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISAS TO ALL FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS HEADQUARTERED IN BRAZIL. PRESS OFFICE IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT CHANCES OF SUCCESS, BUT SAID THAT PROCESS OF SECURING APPROVAL WOULD TAKE TWO MONTHS AT BEST.

D) MEANWHILE, PRESS OFFICE SAID THE MINISTRY WAS DOING ITS BEST TO PROVIDE QUICK VISA SERVICE: THAT ANY U.S. CORRESPONDENT WHO BRINGS HIS PASSPORT AND FOREIGN MINISTRY ACCREDITATION TO THE ITAMARATY OFFICE IN RIO OR BRASILIA IN THE MORNING, WILL BE ABLE TO PICK UP HIS PASSPORT IN THE AFTERNOON. THEY ADMITTED THAT CORRESPONDENTS RESIDENT IN OTHER CITIES, "WHERE THE ITAMARATY HAS NO OFFICES," WERE UNDER A HANDICAP.

E) OBVIOUSLY, ALL U.S. CORRESPONDENTS SHOULD OBTAIN THEIR FOREIGN MINISTRY ACCREDITATION AS SOON AS THEY REACH BRAZIL. APPLICATION FORMS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICES IN RIO AND BRASILIA.  
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